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FROM THE EASTERN SEA

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FROM THE EASTERN SEA

BY

YONE NOGUCHI

Author of

The Pilgrimage

etc.

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Vigo Street

ELKIN MATHEWS

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Kamakura

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This book of poems was first brought out in London in 1903, and the edition was soon exhausted. The book met with success in Japan it being now in its fifth edition.

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I DEDICATE

THIS BOOK TO THE

SPIRITS OF FUJI MOUNTAIN

Fuji Yama,
Touched by thy divine breath,
We return to the shape of God.
Thy silence is Song,
Thy song is the song of Heaven:
Our land of fever and care
Turns to a home of mellow-eyed ease—
The home away from the land
Where mortals are born only to die.
We Japan daughters and sons
Chanting of thy fair majesty,
The pride of God,
Seal our shadows in thy bosom—
The balmiest place of eternity,
O white-faced wonder,

O matchless sight,
O Sublimity, O Beauty!
The thousand rivers carry thy sacred image
On their brows;
All the mountains raise their heads unto thee
Like the flowing tide,
As if to hear thy final command.
Behold! the seas surrounding Japan
Lose their hungry-toothed song and wolfish desire,
Kissed by lullaby-humming repose,
At sight of thy shadow,
As one in a dream of poem.
We being around thee forget to die:
Death is sweet,
Life is sweeter than Death.
We are mortals and also gods,
Innocent companions of thine,
O eternal Fuji!

THE VALLEY OF PEACE

GOLD is the colour of bliss:
The goddess Peace wore a golden robe.
The flowers,
With thousand love tales of beauty,
With odour as from a chanting valley,
Embellished her hair;
From her radiant eyes
Sparkled the Spring of Heaven
O'er the gossamer dale;
Surrounding her,
Angels of whitest silence—
Who shall live, though the world be destroyed—
Mingled with the birds
In beauteous confusion:
The birds did not trouble with songs.
She in her velvet sandals
Stepped airily
As the stealing yellow steps of the young moon
Toward an ancient forest of love;
Her every step
Echoed a silent preaching of peace.
The heard song of winds was melodious,
And the melody increased,
After all the winds ceased their voice song,

Singing on in voicelessness:
So the voiceless preaching of peace
Is highest.
A honey-bee stopped on her lips:
Her mouth was a flower ready to fly,
Bedewed by infinity.
Her smile was a summer dawn.

* * * * *

The valley of Peace,
Without female art of concealing,
With white shamelessness of innocence,
With high-born gentle pride,
Opened its bosom to rapture and music:
The rapture and music were those of a poem yet unwritten.
Every bud hurried to greet the sunlight:
The sunlight brought kisses
From a fragrant place of Beauty and Life.
Every infant tree grew high,
And gathered
The evening stars of violet song;
The life of a bird was the life of a brook,
With crimson gossips and passions:
The brook was in abundant delight
With the shadow of woman,
For the best secret and beauteous glory of God
Shone from woman.

And the woman worshipped her own God
In the eye-shrines of the man,
And compared her silken faith
With that of his sea-like bosom of profundity.
The patience and valour of the man
Were those of the old mountain under an autumn moon;
The love and mellowness of the woman
Were those of grapes with purple grace:
Taste of the grapes to the man inspired
Love of the world and of the female breath.
The golden bliss gorgeously embroidered the valley:
In the bliss
And breezes from another sweet world,
The man and woman did bind
Their arms and limbs,
As roots of a tree that were fed
In the snug bosom of the earth;
They did sleep on the furry bed of grasses,
Over which the goddess Peace threw her mother's woollen mantle;
They did dream the dreams of roaming
In the deepest wood of a land of Love
And Immortality:
The divine history of that land
Was hidden
Within the heart of the woman.

LINES

WHEN I am lost in the deep body of the mist
on a hill,
The universe seems built with me as its pillar.

Am I the god upon the face of the deep, nay,
deepless deepness in the beginning?

APPARITION

APPARITION

'TWAS morn;
I felt the whiteness of her brow
Over my face; I raised my eyes and saw
The breezes passing on dewy feet.

'Twas noon;
Her slightly trembling lips of passion
I saw, I felt, but where she smiled
Were only yellow flakes of sunlight.

'Twas eve;
The velvet shadows of her hair enfolded me;
I eagerly stretched my hand to grasp her,
But touched the darkness of eve.

'Twas night;
I heard her eloquent violet eyes
Whispering love, but from the heaven
Gazed down the stars in gathering tears.

UNDER THE MOON

THE autumn night had a sad impressive beauty.
I turned my face as a flower,
In indolence: the sweet mystery of indolence
Whispered me an alien legend. I, with lips apart,
With the large mindless eyes, stood
As one fresh from a fairy dream:
The ecstasy of the dream was not yet dry
On my face. The strangest stillness,
As exquisite as if all the winds
Were dead, surrounded me; I idly thought,
What a poem, and what love were hidden behind
The moon, and how great to be beyond mortal breath,
Far from the human domain. My moon-fancy,
Aimless as a breeze of summer eve,
Drowsy as a rose of Spring morning, has passed:
My fancy was a fragrance as from an unknown isle
Where Beauty smiled her favourite smile.
How glad I was, being wounded by
The beautiful rush of yellow rays!
The sad sobbing charm of the moon

Was that of the face of an ancient fairy.
The moon gracefully kept her perfect silence
Until a greater muse shall restore the world
From demon's sword and unworthy death.
I was in the lullaby of the moon,
As a tree snugly wrapped in the mist:
I lost all my earthly thoughts.
The moon was voiceless as a nun
With eyes shining in beauteous grief:
The mystic silence of the moon
Gradually revived in me the Immortality.
The sorrow that gently stirred
Was melancholy-sweet: sorrow is higher
Far than joy, the sweetest sorrrow is supreme
Amid all the passions. I had
No sorrow of mortal heart: my sorrow
Was one given before the human sorrows
Were given me. Mortal speech died
From me: my speech was one spoken before
God bestowed on me human speech.
There is nothing like the moon-night
When I, parted from the voice of the city,
Drink deep of Infinity with peace
From another, a stranger sphere. There is nothing
Like the moon-night when the rich noble stars
And maiden roses interchange their long looks of love.
There is nothing like the moon-night

When I raise my face from the land of loss
Unto the golden air, and calmly learn
How perfect it is to grow still as a star.
There is nothing like the moon-night
When I walk upon the freshest dews,
And amid the warmest breezes,
With all the thought of God
And all the bliss of man, as Adam
Not yet driven from Eden, and to whom
Eve was not yet born. What a bird
Dreams in the moonlight is my dream:
What a rose sings is my song.

WORLD OF FANCY

WORLD of fancy! O new earth!
There mortals dream in the haze of ecstasy.
What a strange amity of earth!
What am I? Mortal? or god?
Oh, where go I? Farewell, my comrade!
O world of evening mists!
There playful Fancy beguiles away
The memory of a better day,
From my breast,
Into a dale of Forgetfulness.
The lamp-lights of web-like streets bathed in the opiate mists,
Dream in alien calmness.
Alas! I have lost my path! Astray!
O cheating elf, leave me alone, pray!
I long to steal toward a flowery dale by the moon-beams.

O CHO SAN

DREAM was in the soul of the garden brook,
Spring in its song : O Cho San
Leaned her down to face her image
In the brook ; both smiled in greeting.
In sudden thought she looked behind :
The sadness of a midnight star
Abode in her unmoving eyes ;
The mists of silence filled the gate of her lips.
The moments slipped by : the sunlight fell
Over her face, as a golden message ;
The kiss of beauty graced her hair ;
The soft odour of womanhood beautifully rose ;
The butterflies surrounding her forgot to part :
She was in indolence. Slowly she
Began a dreamy smile, silently facing
Toward a calm sea of fancy : her smile
Was that of an April-night cherry-blossom
To the wind. Softly she looked round and whispered :
' At the return of my lord I will thus smile.

My sweet lover, when Anata shall return!'
And smiling bravely with a sweet intent, she said:
'Look what a beautifully smiling O Cho San!'
Then much she blushed, and started up, and, with a sigh,
Began a languid, graceful walk along the path:
Her walk was that of an afternoon breeze
With the fragrance of cherry-blossoms.
The petals of the flower, like butterflies,
Abruptly fell, some on her shoulders
And her hair; the brook gossiped of Spring.
She walked amid the solemn loveliness of eve:
And solitude and dreams were with her soul;
Dim poems rose around her like odours
Unto the moon. She was beautiful as one
Who smiling, enters in the gate of Sorrow:
The earth upturned her melancholy face
Toward the heavens; the evening bell
Tolled as the last song of a sea.
'Beloved! Beloved!' she cried;
Her streaming eyes beheld a silent star.

ADDRESS TO A SOYOKAZE *

O SOYOKAZE,
From the golden bower of the morning sun,
In gracefully loose gown,
Your eyes strewing the wealth of aerial beauty
That is half shadow, half odour,
Up with me, Soyokaze!
I've left behind the mortal love,
And all the books dear next to woman.
Up, up, and seek with me
A thousand stars
Lost beyond the skies!
Sail afar with me,
O Soyokaze, on light-gleaming step;
Sail into the garden strange yet my own;
I'll build there my home in the moonbeams,
I'll gather the poems from the flowers,
And from the hearts of birds.
Sail, sail, my Soyokaze!
When I am tired,

* 'Soyokaze' is 'zephyr' in Japanese.

We'll rest, my head on your shoulder,
And I'll listen to your tales
That you heard under the roses
Passing througn the woodland.
When the tree throws its shadow on the ground
(The shadow is its written song),
And I see not its real meaning,
You will instantly rise,
And play the harp of the leaves,
And make me fully understland.
O beloved Soyokaze,
My dear comrade,
Be with my soul eternally
Since I am sundered from the world,
And am alone!

THE MYOTO

THE woman whispered in the voice that roses have lost:
'My love!'
The man said, 'Yes, dear!'
In the voice that seas cannot utter.

The woman whispered in the voice of velvet-footed moonbeams:
'My love!'
The man said, 'Yes, dear!'
In the voice that mountains keep in bosom.

The woman whispered in the voice of eve calling the stars to appear:
'My love!'
The man said, 'Yes, dear!'
In the voice of dawn for Spring and Life.

The woman whispered in the voice of a young summer rivulet:
'My love!'
The man said, 'Yes, dear!'
In the voice of forests unto the sky.

TO CHARLES WARREN STODDARD

NIGHT! The spirit of resignation homes in the night. We eloping from the vile land, ask a lodging of the master of solitude.

O wind! Death-messages from God are sent unto flowers and leaves. Ah, the autumn with frosting teeth tells her fate as a deserted wife!

Stillness! All mortals send their dreamships heavenward on the tide of sleep. Thou and I, Charles, sit alone like two shy stars, west and east.

BY THE SEA

THE moon came sadly out of a hill;
I from the city silently stole:
Many an hour had passed since I shook
The sorrow-thoughts to the winds.
The moon's beautiful cold steps were my steps,
In silvery peace, apart from paths of men:
The dewy mysterious beams, as love-whispers,
Stole into my hair which zephyr stirred
As cloud; I was as in the mazy sweet,
I knew not why. I smiled unto the moon;
The moon understood me: the silence was profound.
On the sea-face unearthly dreams
And greenly melancholic autumn voicelessly stepped:
The moon threw a large soft smile over the sea.
The sea was verily proud to sing:
The sea's passions wooing the shore,
Taught me the secret how to win woman;
But the love of woman was left far behind.
I slowly thought how beautiful to sink
Into the moon-sea and to rise

With worshipping face unto the moon:
A sea-bird suddenly sprung from the wave,
Scattering sea-pearls with lavish wing.
I sat me down on the shore,
With tragic eyes upon the stars,
With my ears unto the sea:
The silence of the stars was as great
As the voice of the sea; it is so
Since the First day, that the stars
Keep the silence and the sea the voice.
I walked with the moon, by the sea,
Till the dawn: what I thought was that
The moon thought, I knew not what.

LINES

ALAS! my soul is like a paper-lantern, its paste wetted off under the rain.

'My love, wilt thou not come back to-night?'

Lo! the snail at my door stealthily hides his horns.
'Oh, put forth thy honourable horns for my sake!
Where is Truth? Where is Light?'

HOMEKOTOBA *

I

I HEAR, O lovely lady, in thy voice,
The music of a hidden flower valley,
Anear yet distant; from thy face
The beauty of Spring flashes:
I linger around thee, faithful and ecstatic.
The murmur of a rose,
Or of a white star that peeps
Out of another world of poetry,
Is the murmur of thy gracious eyes:
Thine eyes are veiled by the misty breezes.
Thy lips of infinity are beautifully wet
With human kisses and with the breath of life;
On thy cheeks bloom the flowers of moonbeams;
Thy bosom holds the mystery of the sky;
The laughter of the air is thy laughter.
The freshness of a sea at moon

* 'Homekotoba' means 'praising words.'

Is like unto thy fragrant thought of woman;
A wood with leaves glistening with dewdrops
And a singing bird are symbols of thy fancy;
A flower of morning prayer is thy upturned look
Into the sunlight that, like organ melody,
Rolls up the vault of heaven from the east;
On thy hair flutters the gossip of heaven.
A vision of heavenly beauty in a haze
Is thy lithe form reclining upon the grasses;
A lily appearing from the gossamer
Is thy face looking out from the bewilderment;
Thy soul is a divine complexity
In which I lose my way as in a dream.
The smile was born in light of summer blessedness;
The dark-browed wind in Spring rain is thy melancholy:
Thy breath is the whisper along a violet road;
Thy shadow on my breast is thy heart's history.

II

I read, O lovely lady, in thy face
All the religions of beauty
(They are nothing else but Love);
Thy silence musical and commanding
Is that of a harp set in the windless air.
Whenever I see thee my new page of life begins,

With the moon of another light,
With the fresh stir of a new field of wealth;
If I was not born for anything else,
I was born with one aim to adore thee:
One aim is enough for any life.
Thy head is thrust up into the breath of gods,
Yet thy feet on the dandelion ground;
Each pool of the sky woos thy beauty,
Every shadow of earth-tree gossips of thee;
The fancy road of thy song I pursue,
I loiter in the blessed vale of thy heart.
O how proud I feel to see thy face
Hasting to meet my face, as a flower
Hurries to the silken shower of sunshine!
I dare to say that thou art fed
With my praising words lavished over thee:
I dream in the odour of thy womanhood.
Since thou belongst me, my life begins
To be very important; I have to walk
Safely on the clear road of emerald light,
Safely along the flower-rimmed path of poesy.
With my hand upon thy bosom,
I will feel all the mystery of thy love;
With thy hand upon my brow,
I ask thee what a confidence thou feelst in me;
Casting two shadows on the stream of Life,
We will whistle of the sweet world to the moon.

III

Thy divinely large eyes, O lovely lady,
Gaze beyond our world into a hid kingdom
Of coral-hued beauty and sapphire thought;
The fragrance from thy lips which are a rose
Speaks more than thy golden speech:
The gossamers tarry around thy rose-lips.
Thou seemst unto me a vaporous beauty
Which I saw upon the Spring seas,
Laying me down on the silvery sand of the shore,
With my soul in the song of the seas;
I fear that thou mayest vanish any moment:
What a fear and joy I feel
In my sacred marriage with thee!
The moon marred by clouds is beautiful:
Joy mingled with fear has a deeper thrill.
How often before my lips opened,
Wishing thy impressive kisses;
How often before my hands stretched,
Wishing to feel thy deep bosom:
I ever dreamed of thee amid the breezes,
Under the shadows of flowers and stars:
If my present union with thee be a dream,
The dream has to be eternal.
Everything has a silent hour at whiles:
'Tis sweet to bathe in the silence by thy side;

'Tis sweeter to raise the head from the sea-silence,
And to stare on thy high-born face,
Like a sea-ear gatherer on the sea-waves
With eyes turned toward the abandoned shore.
Then in the stillness of eve (yet stirring
Enough to make one sweetly sad), I
Bind my body with thineown, and send
My soul along the road of the Divine Unseen.

IV

The soul of flower, O lovely lady,
Is the soul of poem ; the soul of poem
Is thy soul : thou art like a faithful-eyed caravan
Across the waste, bringing heavenly jewels.
The winds come from east and west,
But thy wind of heart only comes from
The singing woodland of Love.
The air around thy bosom grows roseate
By thy fire within ; from the ground
Under thy feet has blossomed a daffodil :
Thy presence is the presence of Sun.
My old memory and new dream jauntily come
Riding on thy eye-flash of pearl :
Thou art the soul of all the dawns.
In thy soul I see a brook
Whose song of silvery happiness I love most,

Since I tired of iron-buskined song;
Thy soul with a far-away voice
Like that of an eve of a thousand stars,
Calls me to a task of high yearning;
I see my face in the mirror of thy heart,
And triumphantly smile, thinking that
I am thy husband and slave.
Under the tree-shade I lay me down,
And smell thy balsam breath stealing
Around me like a sweet ancient tale;
Upturning my face I draw
Thy lovely shape in the purple sky:
Since I love thee, my life grows plain,
My dream being only to be faithful to thee,
My toil being only to entertain thee.
The life of simplicity is the life of beauty:
With the beauty and with thee I remain forever.

AUTUMN

'AUTUMN, Autumn, sir!' stirred me
With a sweet sadness. The dark murmur
And cold song of leaves and winds
Died: it was a beauteous death. I
Paced into dream and thought.
How sadly sweet to die, I was taught
By the leaves and winds: the yellow leaves
Resignedly fell, aud their stir slowly died
Into the silence; the winds passed
Graciously into death. How I
Fearfully love Autumn! How I sadly love
The last moment of the falling leaves
And of the song of winds! The voices,
'Autumn, Autumn, sir!' stamped me
With a silent impression of gloominess
Whose single kiss made me ten years older.
'Autumn, Autumn!' I said. I looked round
Into the silent silence that was outside my voice:
My own words frighted me as those from a grave.
'Autumn, Autumn!' I repeated, and listened dreamily.
How sweetly sad my voice died
Into the voicelessness!
And then my head heavily downward bent. . . .

O HANA SAN

IT was many and many a year ago,
In a garden of the cherry-blossom
Of a far-off isle you may know
By the fairy name of Nippon,
That a maiden who was dressing her hair
Against the mirror of a shining spring,
Casting over me her sudden heavenly glance,
Entreated me to break a beautiful branch
Of the cherry-tree: I cannot forget.
I was a boy on the way home
From my school; I threw aside
All my books and slate, and I climbed
Up the tree, and looked down
Over her little anxious butterfly face:
Oh, how the wind blew fanning me
With a love that was more than earthly love,
In a garden of the cherry-blossom
Of a far-off isle you may know
By the fairy name of Nippon!
I broke a branch, slowly dropped it

To her up-raised hands that God shaped
With best art and pain; she smiled
Toward me an angel smile; she,
Speaking no word, ran away as a breeze,
Leaving behind the silver evening moon,
And hid from me in the shadow of a pine-tree
In a garden of the cherry-blossom
Of a far-off isle you may know
By the fairy name of Nippon.
I stole toward her on tiptoe,
As a silent moonbeam to a sleeping flower,
And frightened her with a shout of 'Mitsuketa wa,'*
And I ran away from her, smiling and blushing,
In a garden of the cherry-blossom
Of a far-off isle you may know.
By the fairy name of Nippon.
And I hid me beneath the gate of temple,
That was a pathway to the heavens.
She stepped softly as the night,
Found me and looked upon me with a smile like a star.
Tapped my head with the branch,
Speaking fondly, 'My sweetest one!'
I had no answer but a glad laugh
That was taught by the happy wind
In a garden of the cherry-blossom
Of a far-ofi isle you may know

* 'I found thee out' in English.

By the fairy name of Nippon.
And that maiden who was known
By the pretty name of O Hana San,
Ran away gracefully as a Spring cloud
Into the heavens, blushing and smiling,
Then I followed O Hana's steps,
Into the heavens, into the realm of Love.

UPON THE HEIGHTS

AND victor of life and silence,
I stood upon the Heights; triumphant,
With upturned eyes, I stood,
And smiled unto the sun, and sang
A beautifully sad farewell unto the dying day.
And my thoughts and the eve gathered
Their serpentine mysteries around me,
My thoughts like alien breezes,
The eve like a fragrant legend.
My feeling was that I stood as one
Serenely poised for flight, as a muse
Of golden melody and lofty grace.
Yea, I stood as one scorning the swords
And wanton menace of the cities.
The sun had heavily sunk into the seas beyond,
And left me a tempting sweet and twilight.
The eve with trailing shadows westward
Swept on, and the lengthened shadows of trees
Disappeared: how silently the songs of silence

Steal into my soul! And still I stood
Among the crickets, in the beauteous profundity
Sung by stars; and I saw me
Softly melted into the eve. The moon
Slowly rose: my shadow on the ground
Dreamily began a dreamy roam,
And I upward smiled silent welcome.

THE GODDESS: GOD

THE goddess spins the wool of the rivulet to its length:
O silver song of the female spinner!
O golden silence of the male spinner!
God spinning with the wheel of Time,
White of day and darkness of the night to eternity.

THE LIFE VESSELS

THE Life vessels for soul passengers glide down the river of Eternity.
O vast river! Solemn river! Yet kind river!
The vessels that are Love-roped by the hand of God,
Sail without failing into the gate of Heaven.

THE FACE IN THE MIRROR

'WHY do you cry so, dear little girl?
Come, dry your tears,' I said,
'Like a dew-bathed butterfly in the sun rays,
And then tell me of yourself.'
The girl said:
'My kind Danna San, 'twas this morn
When the breath of Spring blew along the mountain path,
That I went up alone to gather wild-flowers,
And there naughty neighbour's children shouted at me:
"Look at that dirty motherless girl!"
Then I retorted that I had my mother in the mirror,
And I ran home and I saw the mirror,—
Alas! my mother's face was crying,
Because I cried.
Then I felt still more sad,
And cried still more,
And now still I cry.'
I said to the girl:

'Sweet child, the face in the mirror
Is not your mother's, but your own.'
The girl flinging a quick opposing look,
Impatiently said:
'So many many years older than I you are,
So much more wiser than I you are,
But, my great lord, you know nothing of my mirror.
The face in the mirror is my mother's,
So mother said:
My dear mother never told a lie.
The mirror was left me
When she died, and she said:
"Whenever you want to see me,
You'll find me in the mirror,
I a thousand times have looked in it,
And hidden there my truest face."
Since then, every eve at dusk,
When the church bell sounds to me like mother's call,
I hurry to my mirror,
And I see my mother looking at me.'
Then I said:
'Listen, dear little maiden,
I will adorn your hair with the flowers,
I will give you money for a new Spring dress,
And you shall smile, that's a good girl!
Aren't you happy?
Now look at your mirror, gentle child.'

The girl looked in the mirror, and joyfully exclaimed:
'Mother is happy,
Because I am happy.
I'll not cry any more,
You'll cry no more, my dear mother.'
Then we lay down in the sunlight,
With her pretty head on my knee.
I told many a tale of fairy queens far and near.
My voice was music to her ears,
Her head languidly drooped,
Her innocent sleeping face in the mirror by her side:
I saw the breezes playing with the tassels of her hair.

EVENING

'O HANA! O Hana!' I called:
As she turned, her mouth blossomed.
We sat in the evening of shadow and supper smell.
By-and-by my arm ventured round her neck;
I threw a heavy kiss to sweetly thrill the indolence.
Her head lay on my shoulder,
Her side-long innocent stare slowly stirring me.
The moon paced up through the wood:
We stamped our lazy shadows on the ground.
Oh, pleasing hour of purple silence!
We talked to each other, but in voicelessness;
We wondered,
I listening to the white song of the stars,
O Hana to the cricket song.

THE SEAS OF LONELINESS

UNDERNEATH the shade of the trees, my Self passed into Somewhere as a cloud.
I see my soul floating upon the face of the deep, nay the faceless face of the deepless deep,—
Ah, the seas of Loneliness.
The silence-waving waters, ever shoreless, bottomless, colourless, has no shadow of my passing soul.
I, without wisdom, without foolishness, without goodness, without badness,—am like the god, a negative god at least.
Is that a quail?
One voice out of the back hill jumped into the seas of Loneliness.
Alas, what sound resounds; what a colour returns; the bottom, the heaven, too, reappears!
There is no place of muteness. Yea, my paradise is lost in this moment!
I want no pleasure, love, beauty, success, only the mighty Nothing in No-more.

THE POET

OUT of the deep and the dark,
A sparkling mystery, a shape,
Something perfect,
Comes like the stir of the day:
One whose breath is an odour,
Whose eyes show the road to stars,
The breeze in his face,
The glory of Heaven on his back.
He steps like a vision hung in air,
Diffusing the passion of Eternity;
His abode is the sunlight of morn,
The music of eve his speech:
In his sight,
One shall turn from the dust of the grave,
And move upward to the woodland.

THE SUMMER EVE

THE purple-robed breeze (O fine frenzy !)
Stole away amid the trees, as a silent monk retires;
I turned head from the comradeship of Man,
And lonely stepped, with my motionless eyes
Upon the sinking sun, I—a straying orphan
In another land far from the world of woman.
The sun sank : it was a solemn beauty
Like the death of the greatest bard. I suddenly heard
The songs of Eve begun : the songs of crickets
And rivulets were the songs of the earth where
I stood. My voiceless songs echoed afar
To the voiceless songs of stars : the breath of Eve
Revived all the stars as Spring revives the flowers.
I gladly smelled the heavy-winged fragrance of Summer-earth,
Rising as a romance or love-legend ; my soul
Was in harmony with Beauty and Dream of the Summer Eve :

I was not, then, more than a rose or a cedar.
I began my slow walk among the trees, and I felt
The mystery and Love of the world, and I saw
A mortal shadow on the ground. I raised my face
Toward the rising moon: she will soon begin
To draw her Summer-night fancy with the tree-shadows.

DREAMY PEACE DWELT WITH ME

DREAMY Peace dwelt with me, whose magic vapours enclosed me, softly as lovers' shadows.

I ever nod upon the graves of Silence.

I ever loll upon waves of muteness, wrapping mists about my breast.

I ever roam around the unsettled land of Dawn, where the ruins moulder into their rest.

SKY-CHILDREN

Sky-Children

CHERUBIM! Cherubim!
What is our own song?

Cherubim

Free-born! Free-born!
Ye are children of the wind:
The song of the wind is your song,
With sound
That is half a fluttering odour,
Along the path of a rose,
In laughter.

Sky-Children

Cherubim! Cherubim!
What is our own dance?

Cherubim

Care-unknown! Care-unknown!
Ye are children of the wind:
The dance of the wind is your dance,
With bare feet,
Upon sunlit grasses,
In fantasy.

Sky-Children

We sang; we danced;
What do we next?

Cherubim

Innocent! Innocent!
Sleep, then,
In the bosom of the moonbeams;
Sleep,
In silvery lullaby of the stars.

HOW NEAR TO FAIRYLAND

THE Spring warmth steals into me, drying up all the tears of my soul,
And gives me a flight into the vastness,—into a floorless, unroofed reverie-hall.

Lo, such greenness, such velvety greenness, such a heaven without heaven above!
Lo, again, such grayness, such velvety grayness, such an earth without earth below!
My soul sails through the waveless mirror-seas.

Oh, how near to Fairyland!
Blow, blow, gust of wind!
Sweep away my soul-boat against that very shore!

LINES

I LOVE the saintly chant of the winds touching their odorous fingers to the harp of the angel, Spring;
I love the undiscording sound of thousands of birds, whose concord of song echoes on the rivulet afar;
I muse on the solemn mountain which waits in sound content for the time when the Lord calls forth;
I roam with the wings of high-raised fantasy in the pure universe;
Oh, I chant of the garden of Adam and Eve!

O HARU

BEWITCHING O Haru, a Japan girl,
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Knelt before the marriage god;
Her beautifully-powdered neck bent in prayer.
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

O Haru said: 'Give me a husband,
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Whose burning breath upon my eyes
Slightly and sweetly makes me blind!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband, whose murmur
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Breathes from a secret valley
Wherein only the Spring moon steals!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband, whose turn of eyes
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Has such firing grace as a breeze,
O'er the red poppy of morn!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband whose bosom
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Is the deep forest of freshest love,
With a hidden bird of song!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!

'Give me a husband whose voice
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Is the voice of the sea fraught with the odour
Of an invisible fairy isle!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband whose fancy-fingers
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Touch each rose-petal of my lips,
As a wind the road-side grass!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband whose simple soul
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Gazes only on my blushing face,
As a meadow upon the dawn of light!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband whose kisses at night
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart!)
Awaken my maiden gaiety
To gay womanhood!
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart!)

'Give me a husband whose steps to my side
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart !)
Are like moonlight through a gate of poem,
Along the gracious path of repose !
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart !)

'Give me a husband whose fragrance of heart
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart !)
I smelled before from a summer shade,
Or from a singing stream !
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart !)

'Give me a husband whose fair face
(Chorry-blossom in O Haru's heart !)
I had owned before I was born,
And lost since in this world !
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart !)

'Give me a husband whose breast peeps
(Cherry-blossom in O Haru's heart !)
From his gown, and shows "my dearest love,"
Though I know not when I wrote it !
(Chrysanthemum in O Haru's heart !)'

SPRING

SPRING,
Winged Spring,
A laughing butterfly,
Flashes away,
Rosy-cheeked Spring,
Angel of a moment.
The little shadow of my lover perfumed,
Maiden Spring,
Now fades,
The shadow,
The golden shadow,
With all the charm.
Spring,
Naughty sweet Spring,
A proud coquette
Born to laugh but not to live,
Spring,
Flying Spring,
A beautiful runaway,

Leaves me in tears,
But my soul follows after,
Till I catch her
Next March.
Spring,
Spring!

THE SUMMERLAND

I CAME to the Summerland,
The land of yellow afternoon.
O the delicious land of lazy shadows!
The red-lipped tranquillity in her face!
O the luxurious land with the sunshine,
With the juice of love!
Her melody and odour softly creep
Down to the sleeper through the grave,
Waking him to life again.
O the land of dream and whisper!
O the land of bliss and flowers!
Sorrow and darkness were forgotten all,
With the tragedy of a buried city.
The ecstasy and beauty filled
In the bosom of the stream.
Her light-stepping song was like
An aimless gossip of a rose,
The mountain's voice I felt:
It was a voice heard in the far past,

I knew not where nor how.
The freshness flung from the green trees,
From their shadows, was the poetry written
Upon a beautiful woman of a foreign race.
I slowly drew a purple vision,
Dreaming of the kisses with
Shapes unseen yet mysteriously sweet:
A yearning music crawled in my brain.
Amid the mellow smell of dusky indolence
I roamed: upon my face I
Gathered the fruitage of repose:
My overflowing gladness in laughter
Arose like fairy-incense to the sky:
To me all the flowers upturned.
I said: 'Here I will work how to win
The fair love of the moon, and to gather
The fancy from the lily's nodding brow.
With the careless fashion of the breeze I will
Scatter my smile: my smile shall be
Rich with the flower's honey and odour.
My busy task shall be to send
My soul into the heart of Muses,
My aim to learn how to raise
The perfect image of God in my bosom.
How happy to see the butterflies
Puzzling to choose between the flowers
And those eloquent with joy

In my cheeks! I will stray
To the silvery path of the moon,
Along the shadows of my favourite thought,
Amid the zephyr's falling music:
My song shall be the song of sailing clouds.'

LINES

THE roses smile in breeze—Angel Spring's balmy breath.

The light plays with the maid of downcast eye,—the shadow.

The girl of winged heart is ready to fly in another land for another lover.

The youth with rolling eyes in love throws him down, and says:

'Lo, thy feet are washed white with my kisses, my love!'

BEYOND THE SILENCE

IDLY went upward along the stream
My boat, leaving behind human purpose
And strife; lazily went my boat
Into the indolence, slowly slipping
From the coils of measured distance:
The unhurried course of it was onward.
My fancies, like living breezes,
Softly impelled my boat.
The beauty grew more suggestive,
And the ease more alien;
The elfish-eyed wind with lover's cunning steps
And furtive fingers passed me by,
And left me in heavy sleep
And pressing sweet; the swarming odours
Were from an unknown but very intimate place.
And I found the cherry-blooms, in queenly pride
And human beauty, along the banks:
Some in angel's lovely innocence,
Some with woman's subtle strategy

Threw naked shadows on the stream.
My boat dreamed upward, hearing but
The elusive voice, 'Beyond! Beyond!'
My fancies increased; until the cherry forests
Lingered at the foot of a mountain
Where the waters began slowly their course.
A slim pathway pierced the heart of the mountain.
What a thievish light peeped out!
The light allured me to a strange adventure;
I left the boat. The pathway,
With pale dews and misty airs
That are unknown of mortal breath for centuries,
Numbed my judgment of Man.
My soul faded away after the sound
Of my lone steps; I steeped me
In the alien murmurs of ancient soberness
Beyond the silence thick around me.
A thousand hurried steps I took.
The pathway with sudden bliss and life
Awakened wide into the rapture of sunshine
And the village; the gloom stole away
Into the dim heart of the hill. 'Village! Village!'
I cried. The village, with simple pride,
With lofty leisure, without low yearning,
Without modern lament, gracefully appeared:
The silence of women of the village was supreme
Far above that of flowers. The houses stood

With ancient fashion of delight,
And ready welcome; the dwellers
Humbled in unpolished beauty and artless grace.
'Arcady! Arcady!' I cried. The rich content
And slumberous concord filled the village
As with a beaming cup;
The ending of songs of men and birds,
And the slow death of breezes,
Left the freshest silence;
The familiar wealth diffused soft peace
And healthiest dreams and quiet smiles.
When I have read a strange marvel
In those gracious dwellers, they all
Cried to me, 'Where art thou come from?'
The chieftest one in serene air,
Courteously approaching me, with antique smile,
Thus spoke: 'The history of cherry-flowers
In beauty and spring, is our history;
We live amid the thoughts of morning dews,
And gladly die into the winds of nocturnal sweet;
Those written on the sensitive brows of stars
Are our faith and unspoken love;
The whispers that the winds bring
From unborn ages, are our whispers;
We for ever bathe in the proud innocence
And rich-eyed majesty.
The majestic abundance and vast promise

Scatter their fruits over the village,
In the Infinity. Stranger, thou,
One from the place full of swords
And blood-thirsty speech, throw thy foolish care
And idle aim into this rural glory
And glad peace! Beware! Our village
Since the days of God hath no tie
With another world of blackest crimes!'
He looked round, abruptly stopped into silence:
The breezes with foreign grace passed by.

TO OCEAN

THREATENING largeness, thrilling space of wonder,
Ocean of whitest glory, Ocean of overwhelming peace,
I behold thee,
Like God saying 'It is good' on thy new face.
Ocean of commanding coldness,
Eternal organist for the souls of the land,
Mighty singer for Man and Truth,
I hearken unto thee,
Like Adam turning from his Eve and home.
O Ocean fed by spirits of Deathlessness,
O Ocean vast in strength of Heaven,
I wander over thee,
Like a silken dove out of Noah's ark,
Sealing my shadow in thy bosom.

IN THE VALLEY

THE Sierra-rock, a tavern for the clouds, refuses to let Fame and Gold sojourn.

Down the Heaven by the river-road, an angel's ethereal shadow strays.

The Genii in the Valley-cavern consult in silence the message of the Heavens.

O Lord, show unto mortals thy journal—the balance of Glory and Decay!

TSUNE

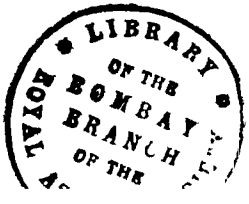
THREE brothers older than me I had,
But only one sister younger than me:
Bonny little Tsune she was called.
Mother said she was born to love me;
She smiled, appealing to be loved by me.
To be sure some demon lived in me,
I loved to tease her, calling 'freckle face':
The story is as old as a star,
I was ten and she was six.
(Angelic Tsune! Bonny little Tsune!)
She cried, calling me 'naughty boy;'
Mother patted her cho cho mage* hair,
That O Matsu San arranged with best care,
And said sweetly: 'Look down, dear,
Into the garden well by the cherry tree,
There you will see a lovely O Tsune San,
Who is loved by all the gods.'
(Bonny little Tsune! Angelic Tsune!)
It was one Spring eve,

* A queue arranged butterfly-shape.

The breezes blew from Beauty's valley,
The moon in beaming laughter stole
To the unlighted room where the shrine stood;
I saw her there kneeling and praying:
'Good Lord, kind Nono Sama,
Take off, pray, the freckles from my face!
My brother will not take me
To the street on the coming festival.'
All the town knew that she was a lovely girl,
As Oto Hime San who lived under the seas:
The moonbeams fell on her cho cho mage hair,
I saw her little fingers looking so pretty.
To be sure some demon lived in me,
I loved to tease her, calling 'freckle face.'
(Angelic Tsune! Bonny little Tsune!)
One day she became ill, I knew not why;
She asked mother if her sickness might
Take away the freckles from her face.
When mother said yes, she happily smiled,
Saying: 'How glad I am to be ill!'
(Bonny little Tsune! Angelic Tsune!)
I knew not how she grew worse;
O Matsu San, her beloved hair-dresser,
Sat by her sick-bed, and told her
Many a story of girls in beautiful dress,
And left her a large box of cake.
She asked mother to set it on the shelf,

Where she could see it from her bed,
And said to herself she would eat,
Some fair day in the garden
Amid the Chrysanthemums and roses,
When she got all very well.
(Angelic Tsune! Bonny little Tsune!)
To be sure some demon lived in me,
I went stealthily to the shelf,
And climbed, and stole some cakes,
And put them in my sleeves, Alas!
When she threw her wildly accusing eyes
Over me, and said in her feeble voice:
'You naughty boy,
Don't steal my own cakes,
I have to eat when I get well!'
To be sure some demon lived in me,
I answered: 'Shut up, freckle face!'
(Bonny little Tsune! Angelic Tsune!)
And she cried, and cried, and died,
When the tide of Saya river ebbed,
That ran girdling our town of flowers
And the winds in the garden passed.
Mother said that I killed her
Calling 'Freckle face;'
Mother did not know
That I stole her own cakes;
If I killed her, that was why.

I cried, repenting my great crime,
Day by day, night after night.
'I killed her,' I murmured in tears,
When no one was around me.
(Angelic Tsune! Bonny little Tsune!)
She was buried
In the neighbouring churchyard:
The winds blew from a bamboo bush
By her little tomb, calling me
'Naughty boy' in plaintive voice;
The stars shone every night above me
With the beams of her wildly accusing eyes;
The sparrows flying from her churchyard,
Twittered around me, 'I killed her.'
(Bonny little Tsune! Angelic Tsune!)
I alone sat by her little tomb,
And buried a few pennies to buy
The cakes that I stole,
And I cried, I did not know
How to pray her forgiveness,
But I knew well she loved money.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LINES

FROM BASHO

I HAVE cast the world
And think me as nothing.
Yet I fed cold at snow-falling day,
And happy on flower-day.

Mr. GEORGE MEREDITH.—'Your poems are another instrance of the energy, mysteriousness, and poetical feeling of the Japanese, from whom we are receiving much instruction.'

Dr. RICHARD GARNETT.—'You have been remarkably successful in conveying that sentiment of poetical reverie which you desire to produce.'

FIONA MACLEOD.—'I find atmosphere and charm and colour and naïveté, and the true touch of the poet.'

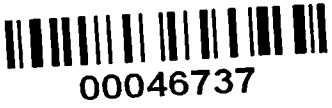
Mr. WILLIAM M. ROSSETTI.—'They are full of a rich sense of beauty, and of ideal sentiment. In fact the essential excellence of the poems and the particular quality of their excellence surprise me. "The Myoto" is truly a beautiful little piece marked by feeling equally simple and deep.'

Mr. THOMAS HARDY.—'I am much attracted by the novel metaphors and qualifying words, which often are full of beauty, the luxuriance of phrase suggesting beds of Eastern flowers under the moonlight.'

Mrs. MEYNELL.—'They are really poems, really poetry.'

Mr. SIDNEY COLVIN.—'I find in them all a very genuine poetical feeling of a kind rather new in our literature, and often a real felicity of expression.'

Sir LEWIS MORRIS.—'Often the imagery is a little difficult for a Western reader to follow, but I am content to think that it is the Eastern view of natural objects, and appreciate the calm meditative spirit with which it regards the eternal silence of the heavenly bodies, and the beauty of the flowery earth with its revolving seasons, and mysteries of Birth and of Death.'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